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constitute a filing within the applicable statutory period.

(e) A complaint is deemed filed on the date it is received by the Commission. [Rule 63.]

§ 502.64 Answer to complaint; counter-complaint.

(a) Respondent shall file with the Commission an answer to the complaint and shall serve it on complainant as provided in subpart H of this part within twenty (20) days after the date of service of the complaint by the Commission or within thirty (30) days if such respondent resides in Alaska or beyond the Continental United States, unless such periods have been extended under § 502.71 or § 502.102, or reduced under § 502.103, or unless motion is filed to withdraw or dismiss the complaint, in which latter case, answer shall be made within ten (10) days after service of an order denying such motion. Such answer shall give notice of issues controverted in fact or law. Recitals of material and relevant facts in a complaint, amended complaint, or bill of particulars, unless specifically denied in the answer thereto, shall be deemed admitted as true, but if request is seasonably made, a competent witness shall be made available for cross-examination on such evidence.

(b) In the event that respondent should fail to file and serve the answer within the time provided, the presiding officer may enter such rule or order as may be just, or may in any case require such proof as he or she may deem proper, except that the presiding officer may permit the filing of a delayed answer after the time for filing the answer has expired, for good cause shown.

(c) A form of answer to complaint is set forth in Exhibit No. 2 to this subpart. [Rule 64.]

(d) In addition to filing an answer to a complaint, respondent may file a counter-complaint alleging violations of the Shipping Acts within the jurisdiction of the Commission. The filing of counter-complaints and answers to counter-complaints is governed by the rules and requirements of § 502.62 (excluding fees) and of this section for the filing of complaints and answers. Counter-complaints may be served di-

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rectly by the parties if authorized by the presiding officer.

[49 FR 44369, Nov. 6, 1984, as amended at 58 FR 27210, May 7, 1993]

§ 502.65 Replies to answers not permitted.

Replies to answers will not be permitted. New matters set forth in respondent's answer will be deemed to be controverted. [Rule 65.]

§ 502.66 Order to show cause.

The Commission may institute a proceeding by order to show cause. The order shall be served upon all persons named therein, shall include the information specified in § 502.143, may require the person named therein to answer, and shall require such person to appear at a specified time and place and present evidence upon the matters specified. [Rule 66.]

§ 502.67 Proceedings under section 3(a) of the Intercoastal Shipping Act, 1933.

(a)(1)(i) The term *general rate increase* means any change in rates, fares, or charges which will (A) result in an increase in not less than 50 per centum of the total rate, fare, or charge items in the tariffs per trade of any common carrier by water in intercoastal commerce; and (B) directly result in an increase in gross revenue of such carrier for the particular trade of not less than 3 per centum.

(ii) The term *general rate decrease* means any change in rates, fares, or charges which will (A) result in a decrease in not less than 50 per centum of the total rate, fare, or charge items in tariffs per trade of any common carrier by water in the intercoastal commerce; and (B) directly result in a decrease in gross revenue of such carrier for the particular trade of not less than 3 per centum.

(2) No general rate increase or decrease shall take effect before the close of the sixtieth day after the day it is posted and filed with the Commission. A vessel operating common carrier (VOCC) shall file, under oath, concurrently with any general rate increase or decrease, testimony and exhibits of such composition, scope and format

that they will serve as the VOCC's entire direct case in the event the matter is set for formal investigation, together with all underlying workpapers used in the preparation of the testimony and exhibits. The VOCC shall also certify that copies of testimony and exhibits and underlying workpapers have been filed simultaneously with the attorney general of every noncontiguous State, Commonwealth, possession or Territory having ports in the relevant trade that are served by the VOCC. The contents of underlying workpapers served on attorneys general pursuant to this paragraph are to be considered confidential and are not to be disclosed to members of the public except to the extent specifically authorized by an order of the Commission or a presiding officer. A copy of the testimony and exhibits shall be made available at every port in the trade at the offices of the VOCC or its agent during usual business hours for inspection and copying by any person.

(3) Workpapers underlying financial and operating data filed in connection with proposed rate changes shall be made available promptly by the carrier to all persons requesting them for inspection and copying upon the submission of the following certification, under oath, to the carrier:

Certification

I, (Name and title if applicable) _____, of (Full name of company or entity) _____, having been duly sworn, certify that the underlying workpapers requested from (Name of carrier) _____, will be used solely in connection with protests related to and proceedings resulting from (Name of carrier) _____'s rates, fares or charges in the _____ trade and that their contents will not be disclosed to any person who has not signed, under oath, a certification in the form prescribed, which has been filed with the Carrier, unless public disclosure is specifically authorized by an order of the Commission or the presiding officer.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Signed and Sworn to before me this ____ day of _____ (month), ____ (year).

Notary Public: _____

My Commission expires: _____

(4) Where a protest contains information obtained in confidence, it will be set out in a separate document, clearly marked on the cover page "Contains Confidential Information." Failure to observe this procedure will subject the protest to rejection.

(5) Failure by the VOCC to meet the service and filing requirements of paragraph (a)(2) of this section may result in rejection of the tariff matter. Such rejection will take place within three work days after the defect is discovered.

(b)(1) Any protest against a proposed general rate increase or decrease made pursuant to section 3 of the Intercoastal Shipping Act, 1933, may be made by letter and shall be filed with the Director, Bureau of Tariffs, and served upon the tariff publishing officer of the carrier pursuant to subpart H of this part no later than thirty (30) days prior to the proposed changes, except that, if the due date for protests falls on a Saturday, Sunday or national legal holiday, such protest must be filed no later than the last business day preceding the weekend or holiday. Persons filing protests pursuant to this section shall be made parties to any docketed proceeding involving the matter protested, provided that the issues raised in the protest are pertinent to the issues set forth in the order of investigation. Protests shall include:

(i) Identification of the tariff in question;

(ii) Grounds for opposition to the change;

(iii) Identification of any specific areas of the VOCC's testimony, exhibits, or underlying data that are in dispute and a statement of position on each area in dispute (VOCC general rate increases or decreases only);

(iv) Specific reasons why a hearing is necessary to resolve the issues in dispute;

(v) Any requests for additional carrier data;

(vi) Identification of any witnesses that protestant would produce at a hearing, a summary of their testimony and identification of documents that protestant would offer in evidence; and

(vii) A subscription and verification.

(2) Protests against across-the-board increases, as defined in §514.2 of this

chapter, and against other proposed changes in tariffs filed on at least thirty (30) days' notice, shall be filed and served no later than twenty (20) days prior to the proposed effective date of the change. The provisions of paragraph (b)(1) of this section relating to the form and manner of filing protests against a proposed general rate increase or decrease shall be applicable to protests against across-the-board increases and other proposed changes in tariffs filed on at least thirty (30) days' notice. A protest is deemed filed on the date it is received by the Commission.

(3) Protests against other proposed changes in tariffs filed on less than thirty (30) days' notice shall be filed and served not later than 9 a.m. on the last workday before the scheduled effective date of the change. any protest may be made by letter and shall be filed with the Director, Bureau of Tariffs, Certification and Licensing, and served upon the tariff publishing officer of the carrier in accordance with subpart H of this part. Such protest shall identify the tariff in question and the grounds for opposition to the change as well as the relief sought by the protestant. A protest is deemed filed on the date it is received by the Commission.

(c) Replies to protests shall conform to the requirements of § 502.74.

(d)(1) In the event the general rate increase or decrease of a VOCC is made subject to a docketed proceeding:

(i) The VOCC shall serve, under oath, testimony and exhibits constituting its direct case, together with underlying workpapers and responses (including objections, if any) to protestants' requests for additional carrier data, on all parties pursuant to subpart H of this part, and lodge copies of such testimony and exhibits with the presiding officer, no later than seven (7) days after the Commission issues its order of investigation in the docketed proceeding; and

(ii) Hearing Counsel and all Protestants shall serve, under oath, testimony and exhibits constituting their direct cases on all parties pursuant to subpart H of this part, and lodge copies with the presiding officer, no later than fourteen (14) days after the Com-

mission issues its order of investigation in the docketed proceeding.

(2) If other proposed tariff changes are made subject to a docketed proceeding pursuant to section 3 of the Intercoastal Shipping Act, 1933, the carrier shall serve, under oath, testimony and exhibits constituting its direct case, together with underlying workpapers, on all parties pursuant to subpart H of this part, and lodge copies of such testimony and exhibits with the presiding officer, no later than fourteen (14) days after the Commission issues its order of investigation. Further procedural dates in such proceeding shall be established by the presiding officer.

(e)(1) Subsequent to the issuance of an order of investigation, the presiding officer may direct all parties to participate in a prehearing conference to consider:

- (i) Simplification of issues;
- (ii) Identification of issues which can be resolved readily on the basis of documents, admissions of fact, or stipulations;
- (iii) Identification of any issues which require evidentiary hearing;
- (iv) Limitation of witnesses and areas of cross-examination, should an evidentiary hearing be necessary;
- (v) Requests for subpoenas; and
- (vi) Other matters which may aid in the disposition of the hearing, including but not limited to the exchange of written testimony and exhibits.

(2) After considering the procedural recommendations of the parties, the presiding officer shall limit the issues to the extent possible and establish a procedure for their resolution.

(3) The presiding officer shall, whenever feasible, rule orally upon the record on matters presented before him or her.

(f)(1) It shall be the duty of every party to file and serve a prehearing statement on a date specified by the presiding officer, but in any event no later than the date of the prehearing conference.

(2) A prehearing statement shall state the name of the party or parties on whose behalf it is presented and briefly set forth:

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(i) Identification of issues which can be resolved readily on the basis of documents, admissions of fact, or stipulations;

(ii) Identification of any issues which require evidentiary hearing, together with the reasons why these issues cannot be resolved readily on the basis of documents, admissions of facts, stipulations or an alternative procedure;

(iii) Requests for cross-examination of the direct written testimony of specified witnesses, the subjects of such cross-examination and the reasons why alternatives to cross-examination are not feasible;

(iv) Requests for additional, specified witnesses and documents, together with the reasons why the record would be deficient in the absence of this evidence; and

(v) Procedural suggestions that would aid in the timely disposition of the proceeding.

(g) The provisions of this section are designed to enable the presiding officer to complete a hearing within sixty (60) days after the proposed effective date of the tariff changes and submit an initial decision to the Commission within one hundred twenty (120) days pursuant to section 3(b) of the Intercoastal Shipping Act, 1933. The presiding officer may employ any other provision of the Commission's Rules of Practice and Procedure, not inconsistent with this section, in order to meet this objective. Exceptions to the decision of the presiding officer, filed pursuant to § 502.227 shall be served no later than fifteen (15) days after date of service of the initial decision. Replies thereto shall be served no later than ten (10) days after the date of service of exceptions. In the absence of exceptions, the decision of the presiding officer shall be final within 30 days from the date of service, unless within that period, a determination to review is made in accordance with the procedures outlined in § 502.227.

(h) Intervention by persons other than protestants ordinarily shall not be granted. In the event intervention of such persons is granted, the presiding officer of the Commission may attach such conditions or limitations as are

deemed necessary to effectuate the purpose of this section. [Rule 67.]

[49 FR 44369, Nov. 6, 1984; 49 FR 47394, Dec. 4, 1984; 57 FR 44508, Sept. 28, 1992; 58 FR 58976, Nov. 5, 1993; 60 FR 27229, May 23, 1995]

§ 502.68 Declaratory orders and fee.

(a)(1) The Commission may, in its discretion, issue a declaratory order to terminate a controversy or to remove uncertainty.

(2) Petitions for the issuance thereof shall: state clearly and concisely the controversy or uncertainty; name the persons and cite the statutory authority involved; include a complete statement of the facts and grounds prompting the petition, together with full disclosure of petitioner's interest; be served upon all parties named therein; and conform to the requirements of subpart H of this part.

(3) Petitions shall be accompanied by remittance of a \$162 filing fee.

(b) Petitions under this section shall be limited to matters involving conduct or activity regulated by the Commission under statutes administered by the Commission. The procedures of this section shall be invoked solely for the purpose of obtaining declaratory rulings which will allow persons to act without peril upon their own view. Controversies involving an allegation of violation by another person of statutes administered by the Commission, for which coercive rulings such as payment of reparation or cease and desist orders are sought, are not proper subjects of petitions under this section. Such matters must be adjudicated either by filing of a complaint under section 22 of the Shipping Act, 1916 or section 11 of the Shipping Act of 1984 and § 502.62, or by filing of a petition for investigation under § 502.69.

(c) Petitions under this section shall be accompanied by the complete factual and legal presentation of petitioner as to the desired resolution of the controversy or uncertainty, or a detailed explanation why such can only be developed through discovery or evidentiary hearing.

(d) Replies to the petition shall contain the complete factual and legal presentation of the replying party as to